



Partners in
Education

GREATER GREEN BAY CHAMBER

Blue Ribbon Commission

March 26, 2018

Partners in Education, coordinated by the Greater Green Bay Chamber, convenes leaders from businesses, post-secondary and K-12 institutions, and community organizations to ensure learners attain knowledge, skills, and values to be successful in their personal, professional, and community lives. Our mission is to be the lead organization for identifying, developing, and supporting education & business partnerships within Greater Green Bay to help all learners prepare for productive community life and strengthen the economic vitality of the region. We have prioritized the following two initiatives:

1. Equity in K-12 Public School Funding

Why

- Current funding formula is outdated, confusing, and inequitable.
- Students are our future workforce.
- Working population is aging – traditional working age population will only grow by 0.1% by 2040. Retirement age will nearly double by 2040. (Population estimate from Department of Administration).

What We Are Doing

- Informing the business community regarding the school funding formula
- Creating educational videos to teach citizens how schools are funded
- Working with lawmakers to streamline and modernize the school funding formula

Desired Outcome

- Equitable and transparent funding formula to ensure all students needs are met no matter the school district, income level, or special needs including ELL and mental health concerns.
- Students have access to modern education and graduate from the K-12 system that is college, career, and community ready.

2. Parent Engagement

Why

- Students struggle to determine their career pathway resulting in large numbers of undeclared students entering post-secondary institutions, taking longer to graduate and get into the workforce.
- Parents are not engaged or don't know how to help their children with academic and career planning and businesses can engage parents.
- Young employees lack the life skills needed to be successful in the workplace and community.
- Businesses can provide career planning resources to employees to aid children's decision making process.

What We Are Doing

- Building resources for parents to help their child with academic and career planning.
- Teaching parents at their worksites about the resources and tools.
- Creating videos to promote awareness of resources and to engage parents.

Desired Outcome

- Engaged parents having conversations with their children about their future career and life pathway.
- Parents utilizing the tools and resources with their children.
- Students create a plan about their future.

To learn more about Partners in Education, contact: Sue Zittlow, 920.593.3412 or szittlow@greatergbc.org



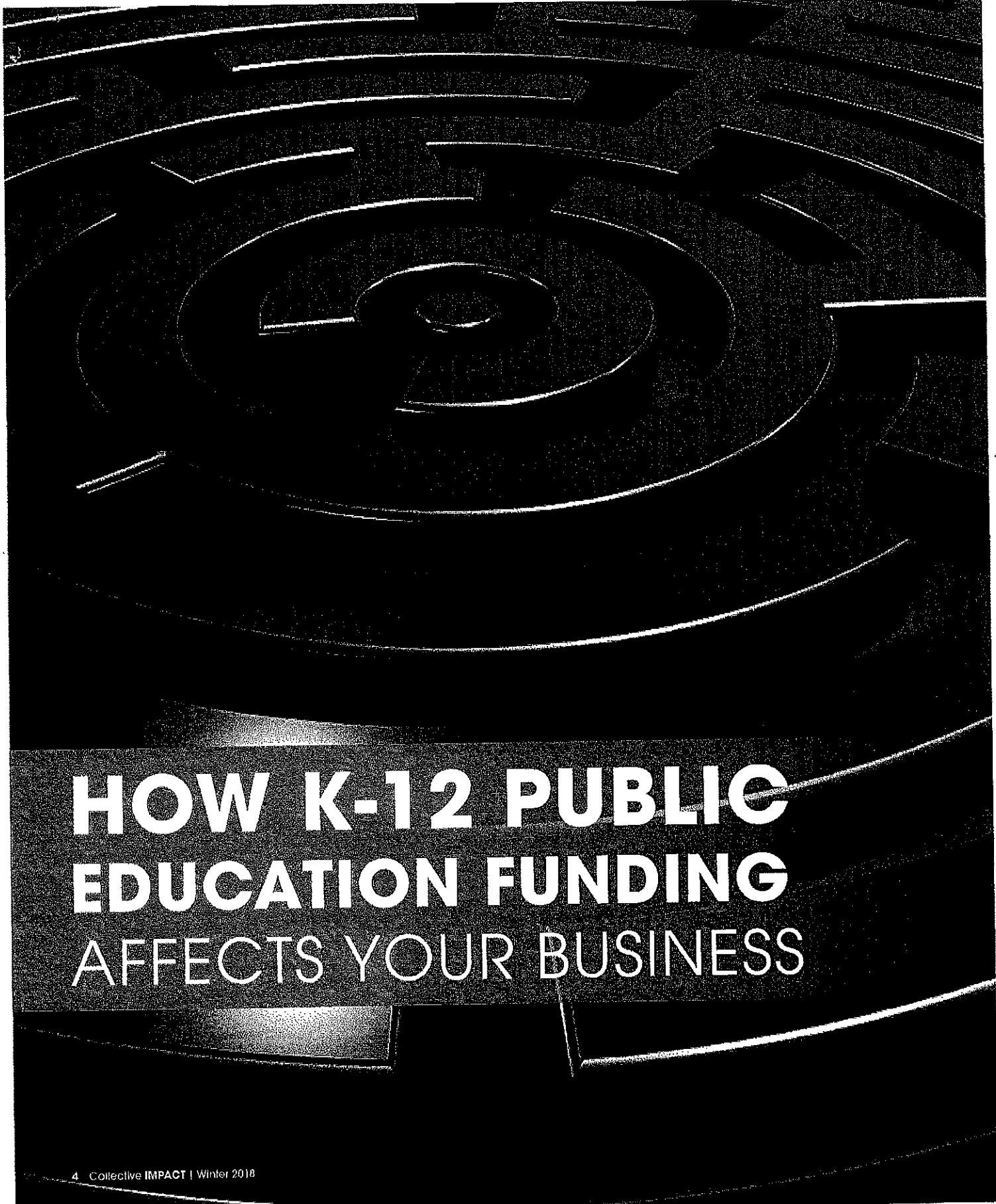
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Our Future: Brown & Kewaunee County Students

- **Number of students**
 - Brown County – 44,536 (15-16 Public Enrollment Master File from DPI)
 - Kewaunee County - 3,630 (15-16 Public Enrollment Master File from DPI)
- **Geographical reach**
 - Square Miles: Brown = 530; Kewaunee = 1,084
 - Urban, Suburban, Rural: Brown = Urban/Suburban; Kewaunee = Rural
- **Free and Reduced lunch**
 - Composite percentage
 - Brown County – 41.0%
(2015 data from <http://education-places.startclass.com/l/3671/Brown-County-WI>)
 - Kewaunee County – 25.6%
(2015 data from <http://education-places.startclass.com/l/3695/Kewaunee-County-WI>)
- **Enrollment Trends**
(Data from USA.com: <http://www.usa.com/rank/wisconsin-state--population-growth-rate--county-rank.htm>)
 - Brown County is ranked #9 with a growth rate of 11.43%
 - Kewaunee County is ranked #45 with a growth rate of 1.77%
- **Special Considerations**
 - Homelessness Brown County 1,012 students (<https://www.achievetbrowncounty.org/increasing-poverty-2016-version-2/>)
 - Poverty in Brown County (<https://www.achievetbrowncounty.org/increasing-poverty-2016-version-2/>)
 - English Language Learners in Brown County: Brown = 8.8 vs. State = 5.27%
(Data from <http://education-places.startclass.com/l/3671/Brown-County-WI>)



HOW K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS

BY: JAYME SELLEN, *director of government affairs*

We've known for a long time that our state's workforce is aging. Nationally, 10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65 each day, a trend that started in 2011 and won't end until 2030. Unfortunately, the workforce waiting to replace the retiring Baby Boomers isn't large enough to fill all of those vacant positions.

The success of any business is intricately tied to its workforce. So what can we do as a region and a state to take on the challenge of a workforce shortage?

Governor Walker recently announced a proposal to invest in a marketing campaign to attract and retain as many people as possible. This must be done; however, our competition will be tough because every state in the nation is in the same predicament. The million-dollar question remains – how do we overcome this workforce shortage challenge? The Chamber's Partners in Education Board and I agree, it all starts with ensuring every student in our K-12 public education system has access to a modern education so they are ready for the next step in life, whether that is a post-secondary education institution, military or the workforce. This would require fixing the K-12 public education funding system; an effort the business community must lead.

We have high expectations for the education of our children; rightfully so. The school administrators in our area have done everything they can to live up to our high expectations; however, the school funding system is broken for many of the school districts in our area. Nine out of the 11 school districts under the umbrella of the Chamber's Partners in Education Board spend less than the state per pupil average. The other two districts are either at the average or slightly over the average. Even among our own communities we have gaps. Imagine what those gaps look like across the state of Wisconsin.

K-12 public education funding is an extremely complicated labyrinth of equations, spreadsheets and limitations. Most of today's funding formula was created in the early 1990s. At that time, Wisconsin was ranked as having the second or third highest state and local tax burden

in the nation. In an effort supported by the Greater Green Bay Chamber, the legislature put in place revenue caps to lower the local tax burden on Wisconsin businesses and families. Revenue caps were applied to all school districts to freeze revenues received from local (property taxpayers), state and federal sources.

Since 1993, school districts in Wisconsin have been subject to revenue limits. Many school districts in Brown County and our surrounding communities were comparatively low in spending when the original limit was implemented. As a result, they were capped at that low rate while other school districts, which were taxing and spending at a higher level, were capped at that higher rate. Although there have been adjustments made to revenue limits, the gap between high and low revenue districts has remained.

Education, demographics and technology have changed dramatically over the past 24 years. There should be no surprise that disparities among school districts have surfaced. Today, districts face a number of outside pressures that didn't exist in the 1990s causing the cost of education to significantly increase.

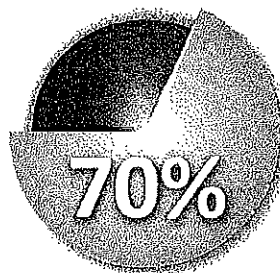
Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature are working to address this problem. First, a Blue Ribbon Task Force on School Funding has been formed to study and brainstorm solutions to this problem.

Representative Joel Kitchens is leading this effort with Sen. Luther Olsen. However, the most significant step taken to address this problem happened during the drafting of the 2017-2019 state budget. Rep. John Nygren and his colleagues on the Joint Committee on Finance included an amendment to assist low revenue districts. Unfortunately, Governor Walker removed this language using his line item veto.

"K-12 public education funding is an extremely complicated labyrinth of equations, spreadsheets and limitations."

If you agree that the ZIP code one lives in should not dictate the type of education they receive, then join the Partners in Education Board, a part of the Greater Green Bay Chamber, in speaking up about your concerns for the future workforce. Contact me at 920-593-3428 or jsellen@greatergreenbay.org to get involved.

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